



**National Park Service**  
**U.S. Department of the Interior**

Mojave National Preserve

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## Mojave National Preserve News Release

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Contact: Danette Woo, (760) 252-6107


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### **Mojave National Preserve Environmental Assessment Released for Proposal to Convert 12 Ranching Wells into Wildlife Guzzlers**

The National Park Service (NPS) has released an Environmental Assessment (EA) for a proposal to convert 12 ranching wells into wildlife guzzlers in Mojave National Preserve. California Department of Fish and Game has proposed to retrofit these ranching water developments that were formerly used for cattle ranching operations into wildlife drinkers. These developments were shut off when the cattle grazing leases associated with them were retired. California Department of Fish and Game wants to convert them into wildlife drinkers over three years.

Mojave National Preserve encompasses almost 1.6 million acres of rugged desert terrain including sand dunes, cinder cones, dry lakes, desert washes, and several mountain ranges. The Preserve includes approximately 700,000 acres of designated wilderness as well as nearly 800,000 acres of critical habitat for the federally threatened desert tortoise.

The purpose of the Environmental Assessment is to examine wildlife water needs and availability in Mojave National Preserve. Three alternatives are presented. The No Action alternative provides a baseline description of the current conditions by which to compare the impacts of the proposed action(s). The Proposed Action presents California Department of Fish and Game's original proposal. The third alternative examines the potential of Science-Based Management and the need for more information regarding



natural springs and wildlife populations in Mojave National Preserve and the availability and need for artificial water. The EA does not identify a preferred alternative. All comments received during the public review period will contribute to the determination of a selected alternative.

The EA has been distributed to government agencies and public libraries. It is posted on the Mojave National Preserve website, <http://www.nps.gov/moja>. Copies are available upon request – see the address below.

The EA will be available for public review for 60 days. Allowing time for postal deliveries, comments must be postmarked by January 31, 2006 and may be directed via mail or email to:

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